

My Nazi Party number is 3240. During a visit to the SS in Sallentin, Himmler noticed me. We had known each other from the Artamenen, and he offered me the opportunity to join in the administration of a concentration camp. I accepted the invitation, and in November 1934 moved to Concentration Camp Dachau where, after training, I became a block leader. In 1938 I became the assistant to the Commandant of the Concentration Camp Sachsenhausen. In November 1939 I advanced to the rank of Schutzhaftlager Fuehrer. In 1940 I was transferred to Auschwitz.

My assigned task was to convert a former Polish army barracks near Auschwitz to a quarantine camp for Polish Prisoners. After Himmler visited the camp in 1941, I received orders to convert the camp into a large concentration camp for eastern prisoners. I was told to take eight to ten thousand prisoners to drain the swamps and prevent flooding on the Weichsle River, and thereby make the land usable. We were to construct a large chemical plant for the Buna Works, part of I.G. Farben Industries. I was further instructed to build at Birkenau a prisoner of war camp for 100,000 Russian prisoners.

In 1941 the first shipment of Jews arrived from Slovakia. On a personal order from Heinrich Himmler [the Reichsfuehrer SS and head of German Police], the people who were unable to work were gassed near the crematorium. In June of 1941, Himmler ordered me to Berlin. I was told of Hitler's final solution of the Jewish problem in Europe. Himmler said that in the General Government of Poland there already existed three extermination centers: Belzek, Treblinka and Wolcek. Since these camps could produce very little and they could not be enlarged, they had been converted to death camps. I myself visited Treblinka in 1942 to obtain information about the conditions there.

The death camps used the following methods. They utilized small rooms with pipes connected to motor vehicles. This method was not dependable since the motors came from old cars and only worked part of the time. They could not handle the flow of people from the Warsaw Ghetto. The commander of Treblinka said they gassed 80,000 people in half a year. The only possibility, according to Himmler, was to expand Auschwitz where four railroad lines met and created a hub. Auschwitz was sparsely populated and could be isolated and self-contained.

For these reasons, he demanded to have an overall plan according to these ideas and demands within four weeks. He also said that the task was difficult and that he could not select anyone – only those who were qualified. He planned to have a high SS officer appointed to execute this